



HOPE - UNDER - DINMORE
& NEWTON
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Public consultation 17 June to 6 August 2017 Local Green Space and settlement boundary

Hope-under-Dinmore Neighbourhood Plan Group

Introduction

Our Neighbourhood Plan has recently been independently examined. The Examiner has not supported our proposal to protect the field at the rear of Tavern Meadow as Local Green Space. He felt that we had not shown that the tests of national policy for such designations had been met. You can read his report in full here.¹

Local Green Spaces are green areas of particular importance to local communities. We think the field meets this description and can be shown to satisfy the tests in national policy.

In the light of the Examiner's comments, we have undertaken a survey of villagers and prepared further evidence.² We have revised the relevant section of the Plan in light of this, and we want to know what you think.

The revised section on Local Green Space

Set out on pages 2 and 3 overleaf are our revised reasons for wanting to designate the field as Local Green Space. No changes are proposed to the accompanying policy.

The area to be designated as Local Green Space is also unchanged (this is shown on the plan on page 4).

Changes to the village settlement boundary

We have also looked again at the settlement boundary for the village. We are proposing to amend this to better reflect the extent of the built-up area. The revised boundary is shown on the plan on page 4.

Previously, the field and the open land between the Brook and the village road were included in the boundary. These areas are excluded under our revised proposals.

In making these changes we have had regard to Herefordshire Council guidance on the use of settlement boundaries to trace the edge of the built-up area and conserve village character.

We want your views

Please tell us your views on our revised proposals.

- Do you support the continued designation of the field as Local Green Space in the Neighbourhood Plan?
- Do you think that the field is special and has a particular local significance for the local community?
- If so, why?
- Do you agree with the village settlement boundary as now proposed?

Please use our comments form to give us your views.

What happens next?

We will carefully consider all views received in revising the Local Green Space and settlement boundary parts of the Neighbourhood Plan.

We will also make changes to other parts of the Plan that have been recommended by the Examiner.

After consideration by the Parish Council the revised Plan will then be re-submitted for further examination.

¹ <https://myaccount.herefordshire.gov.uk/hope-under-dinmore-group>

² Local Green Space to rear of Tavern Meadow, February 2017.
<https://sites.google.com/site/hopeunderdinmoreandnewton/neighbourhood-plan>

Our revised reasons for the designation of the field as Local Green Space are set out below. Subject to your views, this text will be incorporated within the revised Neighbourhood Plan. We have also included the policy itself, in **bold type**. The policy is unchanged from previous versions of the Plan.

Local Green Space

1. Local Plan policies LD1 *Landscape and townscape* and LD3 *Green infrastructure* provide a strategic direction for the protection of green spaces, but it falls to this Plan to identify specific areas for protection. In this regard, the field to the rear of Tavern Meadow at Hope-under-Dinmore has been identified as meriting protection. The Plan designates this land as Local Green Space. This designation was introduced by the National Planning Policy Framework as a means whereby communities may identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them.³ The land meets the criteria set out in the Framework as follows:

It is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves

2. The field is immediately adjacent to the main residential areas of the village, and is directly overlooked by housing situated to the north and east. In addition the village hall backs onto the field.

The green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance

3. Replies to consultations undertaken for the NDP demonstrate that the field is regarded as special by the local community:
 - Open day in 2014:⁴ comments made included reference to the area being unsuitable for housing, flood risk and its importance as an amenity area for the village.
 - Residents' questionnaire survey 2015:⁵ the field was identified as the location least preferred for new housing, with comments referring to its value for visual amenity and access to open land. The field was also specifically identified as a local open space feature meriting protection.
 - Questionnaire survey November 2016:⁶ in this survey of the views of the local community on the field, 91% of respondents regarded the field as important or very important for its community use and recreational value. The field is regularly used on a daily or weekly basis notably by walkers (including dog-walkers). Replies emphasised the significance of the field as a local visual and recreational amenity.
4. The particular local significance of the field is due to:
 - the visual amenity it represents as a whole to the local community: the field is regarded as special by those who simply enjoy the open aspect, without needing to gain access to it. Planning Practice Guidance confirms that designation as Local Green Space may be considered even if there is no public access.⁷ This is applicable in this case, as evidenced by the following replies to the 2016 survey:

³ National Planning Policy Framework, paragraphs 76 and 77.

⁴ Open Day events report 2014. At this early stage, the field had not been identified separately and the comments relate to the field and the open land to the south and east.

⁵ Residents questionnaire survey, Results Report, May 2015.

⁶ The survey results are reported in Local Green Space to rear of Tavern Meadow, February 2017.

⁷ PPG reference ID: 37-015-20140306

“that we do not 'use' the field is not the important factor, rather that it is an empty space. The reason we chose to live here is predicated on the fact that it is an empty rural space and not a piece of rural suburbia”

“Visually an important part of the village also good to have an open view from footpath”

“every village needs a green space, not only for dog walking and recreation, but to balance the outlook for residents. It has been proved many times that houses need a balance of outlook. Green spaces have an enormous influence on mental stress”.

- its contribution to the character and setting of the village: Hope-under-Dinmore village is linear in form, constrained by the local topography and the A49 trunk road and rail corridors which lie to the east and west respectively. The setting of the village is dominated to the east by the woodland of Dinmore Hill and Church Hill Coppice, which descends to meet and overhang the village road and the nearby housing including Tavern Meadow. The field provides a notable contrast to this, with a natural beauty and open aspect which complements the mature woodland. It also provides a setting to the blocks of housing and serves as a buffer between dwellings and the railway line to the west. The field makes a significant contribution to the character and setting of the village. It is the only area of open land in the vicinity which has such a close relationship with the village, emphasising its significance as an important visual amenity.
 - the visual amenity it offers as a whole to the users of the public footpaths: the public footpaths which cross the field are regularly used by residents. Footpath users benefit from the natural beauty and open aspect of the field as a whole.
 - the recreational access it offers both via the public footpaths and other informal footpaths and use of the open space as a whole.
5. The field as a whole is demonstrably special to the local community. Its visual amenity, access and recreational characteristics do not arise in respect of any other tract of land around the village. Due to the particular combination of proximity, visibility, topography and access the field has a uniquely special relationship with the community. It is these aspects that give it its particular local significance.

The green area is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land

6. The field is local in character because of its close relationship with the village, including the neighbouring housing areas to the north and east. The elevated boundary with the railway to the west enhances its local character, adding to the sense of enclosure and its clear relationship with the community it serves.
7. The field is not an extensive tract of land, taking into account site characteristics, its context and relationship to the settlement. It has clear, well-marked boundaries provided by the railway embankment, Cherry Brook and housing. It is limited in extent by these boundaries and forms a distinct visual entity which is enclosed and contained. Its designation as Local Green Space is limited and specific to the field and its special characteristics.

POLICY HUD7: LOCAL GREEN SPACE

LAND TO THE REAR OF TAVERN MEADOW IS DESIGNATED ON THE POLICIES MAP AS LOCAL GREEN SPACE. DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCAL GREEN SPACE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS VERY SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES ARISE WHICH OUTWEIGH THE NEED FOR PROTECTION.

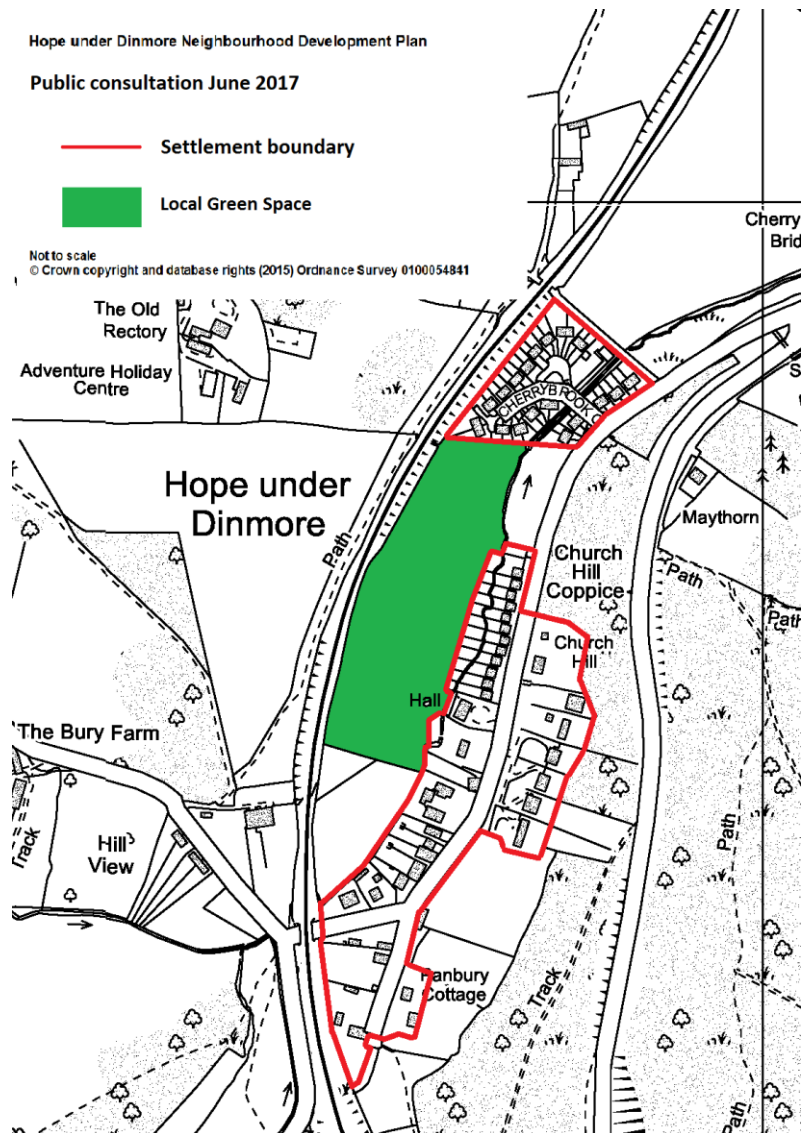
Our revised explanation and policy for the settlement boundary is set out below. Subject to your views, this text and policy will be incorporated within the revised Neighbourhood Plan. The plan shows the proposed Local Green Space and the revised settlement boundary.

Settlement boundary

1. Local plan policy RA3 *Herefordshire's countryside* gives emphasis to the definition of settlement boundaries for named settlements such as Hope-under-Dinmore. Such boundaries serve to define the extent of settlements for the purposes of applying Local Plan policies RA2 and RA3. In the 2015 residents' survey, 71% of respondents supported the identification of a village planning boundary.⁸
2. A settlement boundary is shown on the village Policies Map. The boundary has been drawn having regard to criteria within Herefordshire Council guidance.⁹ It serves to delineate the main built-up areas of the village. It also serves to protect its character and setting by excluding open areas of land which make a positive contribution in this regard.

POLICY HUD2: SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY

A SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY IS DEFINED FOR HOPE-UNDER-DINMORE, AS SHOWN ON THE VILLAGE POLICIES MAP.



⁸ Responses to Q7, Residents questionnaire survey, Results Report, May 2015.

⁹ Herefordshire Council, Guide to settlement boundaries, Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note 20, rev. June 2015